

VEGETABLES



ACREAGE-FALL QUARTER (October, November, December)

October 5, 2004

FLORIDA

FLORIDA WEATHER: Many producers delayed field preparation and planting until the threat of tropical storms passed during August and September. Wind and heavy rain from Tropical Storm Bonnie and the remnants of Hurricane Ivan caused some yield loss for tomatoes in the Quincy area with harvesting underway by late September. Some East Coast growers increased acreage planted in other areas to compensate for losses caused by the hurricanes. Producers in the Immokalee and Palmetto-Ruskin region rebuilt rows flattened and relaid plastic blown about by the strong winds of Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Jeanne but experienced only minor losses of plants. Virtually all Dade County acreage escaped significant damage from the storms with most harvested as a winter crop.

This first quarterly release for the 2004-2005 season shows acreage for harvest during fall months of October through December based on conditions existing October 1. Estimated acreage by growing region is no longer available.

SNAP BEANS: Acreage to be picked is set at 10,000 acres, equal to the acreage harvested during the fall of 2003. Dade County acreage received very little damage from the tropical storms passing over the State during August and September. Most growers delayed planting until the threat of tropical weather passed.

CABBAGE: Growers hope to harvest 500 acres, equal to the acreage cut during the fall of 2003. Producers were spared significant damage from the hurricanes since no acreage was planted until the storms passed.

CUCUMBERS FOR FRESH MARKET: Acreage to be picked this fall is estimated at 4,500 acres 200 acres below the 4,700 acres picked last

fall. Most growers delayed planting until the threat of tropical storms passed with only a very small acreage lost due to stormy, windy weather.

SWEET CORN: Producers expect to pick 4,500 acres this fall, down 300 acres from the 4,800 acres harvested last fall. From late August through present, windy, stormy weather, caused by tropical systems crossing the State, prevented growers from planting all intended acres and damaged earlier planted fields. Many producers delayed planting due to the threat of tropical storms.

BELL PEPPERS: Acreage to be picked this fall is set at 4,900 acres. This compares with 4,500 acres harvested last fall. Most growers put off planting until the threat of tropical storms passed.

TOMATOES: Producers hope to pick 12,000 acres this fall, down 2,200 acres or 15 percent from the 14,200 acres harvested last fall. Acreage in the Quincy area was hit by tropical systems, Bonnie and, to a lesser extent, Ivan, in August and mid-September. Quincy area growers started picking at the end of September. Most acreage in the Immokalee area got rain and some wind from the remnants of Hurricane Ivan as the system passed over into the Gulf of Mexico in late September but escaped severe consequences from Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Jeanne. Growers in the Palmetto-Ruskin area lost most plastic laid and a small amount of plants due to the storms. Most acreage in the East Coast region, around Jupiter and Stuart, received severe damage from Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne with some East Coast producers increasing acreage planted in other areas of the State. Winter crop planting around Homestead is mostly on schedule with some delays caused by the threat of tropical systems during mid-to-late September.

UNITED STATES

GENERAL: The prospective area for harvest of 11 selected fresh market vegetables during the fall quarter is forecast at 163,900 acres, up less than 1 percent from last year. Acreage increased for snap beans, broccoli, cabbage, head lettuce, and bell peppers while acreage decreased for carrots, celery, sweet corn, and tomatoes. Acreage for cauliflower and cucumbers remained the same. Area forecasted for melon harvest is 16,400 acres, up 28 percent from last year. Cantaloupe harvested area is forecast at 11,600 acres, up 38 percent from 2003. Honeydew harvested area is forecast at 4,800 acres, up 9 percent from last fall.

SNAP BEANS: Fall fresh market area for harvest is forecast at 18,200 acres, up 2 percent from last year and 3 percent above 2002. Georgia growers experienced wet and windy conditions resulting from Tropical Storm Frances and Hurricane Ivan. These storms damaged crops, slowed harvest, and delayed other field work throughout the vegetable growing areas. The New Jersey crop was planted early this year. Sufficient rainfall during August has benefitted the crop and good yields are expected. In Virginia, excessive rainfall from hurricanes and tropical storms has prevented growers from tending their fields in a timely manner.

CABBAGE: Fresh market area for harvest is forecast at 6,700 acres, up 3 percent from last year but 3 percent below two years earlier. Harvest of Georgia cabbage was slowed by two consecutive storms that brought heavy rains, strong winds, and tornados through the growing areas during September. In New Jersey, growing conditions varied throughout the State. In the northwest, flooding caused heavy crop loss while other parts of the State had more favorable conditions. In Texas, planting has just finished and the crop is beginning to emerge. Rainfall has been beneficial this season.

SWEET CORN: Fresh market area for harvest is forecast at 9,400 acres, down 4 percent from last year but 1 percent above 2002. California's crop is in good condition with no insect or disease problems reported.

CUCUMBERS: Area for fall harvest is forecast at 7,800 acres, unchanged from last year but 4 percent lower than 2002. South Carolina's fall acreage for 2004 has increased significantly. It is believed this increase is to make up for decreased acreage during the spring season when wet weather disrupted planting. South Carolina growing areas also received heavy precipitation from the hurricanes and tropical storms that made land fall along the east coast. The Texas cucumber crop is doing well as growers get ready for harvest. Recent rains have caused minimal disease problems. The progress of Virginia's crop has been slowed by frequent storms and hurricanes which have plagued the east coast this season. Wet field conditions have increased disease pressure and made it difficult for growers to treat the problem.

BELL PEPPERS: Fall area for harvest is forecast at 5,200 acres, up 11 percent from 2003 but 2 percent less than 2002. In Texas, the crop is doing well. The peppers are still small and have about 20 more days until harvest begins.

TOMATOES: Fresh market area for fall harvest is forecast at 21,600 acres, 9 percent below last year and down 6 percent from 2002. California growers planted fresh market tomatoes as the summer harvest was winding down. Fields have received insecticide treatment as needed. A recent cold snap in the San Joaquin Valley slowed crop development but no significant problems have been noted. The market for California's fresh market tomatoes has improved dramatically following the hurricanes in Florida which curtailed production in the East.

Vegetables for fresh market, prospective acreage for harvest, October, November and December, by States, 2004 with comparisons

| Selected crops and States | Usual harvest period | Fall acreage | | | 2004 area for harvest as percent of 2003 |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|---------|------------------------|---|
| | | Harvested | | For harvest 2004 | |
| | | 2002 | 2003 | | |
| | | Acres | | Percent | |
| SNAP BEANS: | | | | | |
| Florida | Oct-Dec | 9,200 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 100 |
| Georgia | Oct-Dec | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 100 |
| New Jersey | Sep-Oct | 1,600 | 900 | 1,600 | 178 |
| Virginia | Sep-Oct | 1,900 | 1,900 | 1,600 | 84 |
| Total | | 17,700 | 17,800 | 18,200 | 102 |
| CABBAGE: | | | | | |
| Florida | Oct-Dec | 500 | 500 | 500 | 100 |
| Georgia | Oct-Dec | 4,900 | 4,700 | 4,200 | 89 |
| New Jersey | Sep-Nov | 500 | 400 | 500 | 125 |
| Texas | Sep-Nov | 1,000 | 900 | 1,500 | 167 |
| Total | | 6,900 | 6,500 | 6,700 | 103 |
| SWEET CORN: | | | | | |
| Florida | Oct-Dec | 4,900 | 4,800 | 4,500 | 94 |
| California | Oct-Dec | 4,400 | 5,000 | 4,900 | 98 |
| Total | | 9,300 | 9,800 | 9,400 | 96 |
| CUCUMBERS: | | | | | |
| Florida | Oct-Dec | 4,800 | 4,700 | 4,500 | 96 |
| South Carolina | Oct-Dec | 800 | 700 | 1,100 | 157 |
| Texas | Sep-Nov | 1,400 | 1,100 | 1,000 | 91 |
| Virginia | Sep-Oct | 1,100 | 1,300 | 1,200 | 92 |
| Total | | 8,100 | 7,800 | 7,800 | 100 |
| BELL PEPPERS: ^{1/} | | | | | |
| Florida | Oct-Dec | 4,900 | 4,500 | 4,900 | 109 |
| Texas | Sep-Nov | 400 | 200 | 300 | 150 |
| Total | | 5,300 | 4,700 | 5,200 | 111 |
| TOMATOES: | | | | | |
| Florida | Oct-Dec | 13,500 | 14,200 | 12,000 | 85 |
| California | Oct-Dec | 9,500 | 9,600 | 9,600 | 100 |
| Total | | 23,000 | 23,800 | 21,600 | 91 |
| TOTAL OF CROPS LISTED | | | | | |
| Florida | | 37,800 | 38,700 | 36,400 | 94 |
| United States | | 70,300 | 70,400 | 68,900 | 98 |
| TOTAL OF CROPS ESTIMATED | | | | | |
| United States ^{2/} | | 174,200 | 176,300 | 180,300 | 102 |

^{1/} Includes fresh market and processing.

^{2/} Total of crops listed plus broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, head lettuce, cantaloupes, watermelons, and honeydew melons.